



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

AF/2136/5
Ifw

Applicant: William E. Duncan et al.

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING EXPANDABLE PROXY FIREWALL SERVICES

Docket No.: 105.203US1
Filed: January 31, 2001
Examiner: Pramila Parthasarathy

Serial No.: 09/774,001
Due Date: October 25, 2005
Group Art Unit: 2136

MS Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

We are transmitting herewith the following attached items (as indicated with an "X"):

- ☒ Return postcard.
- ☒ Appeal Brief (26 pgs.), including permission to charge Deposit Account No. 19-0743 in the amount of \$250.00 to cover the Appeals Fee.

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SCHWEGMAN, LUNDBERG, WOESSNER & KLUTH, P.A.
Customer Number 21186

By: Thomas J. Brennan
Atty: Thomas F. Brennan
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THOMAS F. BRENNAN
Name

Thomas J. Brennan
Signature

SCHWEGMAN, LUNDBERG, WOESSNER & KLUTH, P.A.
(GENERAL)



APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 41.37

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APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 CFR § 41.37

Mail Stop Appeal Brief- Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

The Appeal Brief is presented in support of the Notice of Appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, filed on August 25, 2005, from the Final Rejection of claims 1-24 and 26-27 of the above-identified application, as set forth in the Final Office Action mailed on March 25, 2005.

The Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 19-0743 in the amount of 250.00 which represents the requisite fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 41.2(b)(2). The Appellants respectfully request consideration and reversal of the Examiner's rejections of pending claims.

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[Synopsis of changes from previous rules:

- *Submit only a single copy of the appeal brief. 37 CFR § 41.37(a)*
- *The requirement to identify related appeals and interferences is expanded to include related judicial proceedings, both prior and pending appeals, interferences, and judicial proceedings. 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(ii).*
- *Copies of any decisions rendered in related proceedings need to be included in the Related Proceedings Appendix. 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(x).*
- *The requirement to identify claim status now includes the claim statuses (rejected, allowed or confirmed, withdrawn, objected to, canceled). 37 CFR § 41.37(C)(1)(iii)*
- *The summary of the claimed subject matter must be a more concise explanation than previously required. 37 CFR § 41.379(C)(1)(v).*
- *There is no longer a requirement to group the claims.*
- *A listing of any evidence relied on by the appellant in the appeal, together with a statement setting forth where the evidence was entered in the record by the Examiner. 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(ix).]*

APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 41.37

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1. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest of the above-captioned patent application is the assignee,
SECURE COMPUTING CORPORATION.

2. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no other appeals or interferences known to Appellant that will have a bearing on the Board's decision in the present appeal.

3. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

The present application was filed on January 31, 2001 with claims 1-26. A non-final Office Action was mailed June 24, 2004. A Final Office Action (hereinafter “the Final Office Action”) was mailed March 25, 2005.

Claims 1-24 and 26 stand twice rejected. Claim 25 has been canceled while claim 27 has been rejected once. Claims 1-24, 26 and 27 remain pending and are the subject of the present Appeal.

4. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

No amendments have been made subsequent to the Final Office Action dated March 25, 2005.

5. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

Appellant describes, and claims in claims 1-24, 26 and 27, systems and methods for providing scalable proxy firewall services to computer networks. Appellant notes in the Background section of the application that a problem with proxy server-based firewalls is that they are difficult to scale as the demand for through-put or resources increase. Software-based solutions to facilitate scaling are limited by the existing hardware. Hardware-based solutions typically require re-installation and re-configuration of the firewall and network topology, a process which is time consuming and expensive.

To address the problem of scaling, Appellant teaches, and claims in claims 1-24, 26 and 27, that the firewall system be configured to include a dispatch host computer and one or more load host computers.

It is a feature of the present invention to provide load balancing of proxy firewall services. In accordance with the present invention, the firewall system can be configured to include a dispatch host computer and one or more load host computers. Proxy firewall services can be provided by proxy applications that reside on either the dispatch host computer and/or the load host computers. In one embodiment, a load host computer can be configured to support multiple proxy applications. In other embodiments, a load host computer can be dedicated to a single resource intensive application. In this framework, a network administrator can flexibly decide how to accommodate the demand for proxy firewall services.

Another feature is to provide an easily expandable firewall system. A system administrator can add another firewall module into the network as network traffic increases to share the load across the firewall modules. The firewall module can be added without disrupting ongoing security services. The proxy firewall system allows the system administrator to incrementally increase the overall proxy firewall service capacity without re-installing the firewall. In one embodiment, this feature is enabled through the inclusion of a configuration file on the dispatch host computer that stores information relating to the load host computers in the firewall system.

Appellant's Specification, paragraphs 19 and 20.

Appellant describes, and claims in claims 1-9, a number of ways to implement a scalable firewall. In the examples shown in Figs. 2A-C, firewall 200A includes a dispatch host computer 202(A-C) and one or more load host computers 226. Dispatch

host computer 202A is connected to an external network (outside network 208). Each load host computers 226 is coupled to the dispatch host computer (202A-C) and, in addition, can be connected to one or more application servers (232, 234, 236).

Specification, paragraphs 21-26, 42 and 43. As claimed in claims 1-9, Appellant teaches that a connection from the external network (outside network 208) is received by the dispatch host computer (202) and distributed to a particular load host computer based on an analysis of the type of protocol of the connection and an analysis of activity across the load host computers. Specification, paragraphs 29-33.

In addition, Appellant teaches in paragraph 29, and claims in claims 2 and 3, that a dispatch proxy can be used to listen for connections on multiple ports.

Appellant also teaches in paragraph 32, and claims in claims 4 and 5, that the load host computer can either be limited to a single protocol, or handle multiple protocols.

Appellant teaches in paragraphs 30-38, and claims in claims 6-8 and 11, that information regarding a connection from an external network is communicated between the load host computer and the dispatch host computer. In one example embodiment, this information is stored in configuration files.

Appellant describes in Figs. 2A and 2C and paragraphs 27, 43 and 44, and claims in claim 9, that the dispatch host computer can provide proxy firewall services.

Appellant describes, and claims in claims 10-16, a method of providing proxy firewall services. In the examples shown in Figs. 2A-C, firewall 200A includes a dispatch host computer 202(A-C) and one or more load host computers 226. The load host computers are identified (e.g., the method of paragraph 38) and configured to provide proxy firewall services (e.g., the method of paragraph 30). Appellant teaches in paragraph 29, and claims in claims 2 and 3, that a dispatch proxy operating in a dispatch host computer can be used to listen for connections on multiple ports. Once a connection has been identified, a local host computer is selected “based on an analysis of the type of protocol of said connection and an analysis of activity across the load host computers” (e.g., using the methods of paragraph 30 or 41).

Appellant describes in paragraph 60, illustrates in Fig. 3 and claims in claims 13-17, methods for selecting a load host computer for a connection. Appellant describes in

Figs. 2A and 2C and paragraphs 27, 43 and 44, and claims in claim 18, that the dispatch host computer can provide proxy firewall services. Appellant describes, and claims in claims 19-22, a method of designating a local host computer (e.g., using the methods of paragraph 30 or 41).

Finally, Appellant describes at paragraphs 37-40, 49 and 50, and claims in claims 23, 24, 26 and 27, a method of expanding proxy firewall services. As noted at paragraph 37, the dispatch host computer 202 receives a connection, selects a load host computer 226 and forwards the connection to the selected load host computer 226. As can be seen in Figs. 2A-C, a second host computer can be connected to the dispatch host computer and, as noted at paragraph 38, “when a load host is added to the firewall system 200A, the newly added load host and the dispatch host 202A communicate with each other.” The communication results in the update of a configuration file. Once information regarding the second load host computer 226 is stored in the configuration file, the second load host computer “is available to process forwarded connections from said dispatch host computer” as noted in paragraph 40.

As noted at paragraph 38, and claimed in claims 24 and 26, information from the load host computer is used to update the configuration file. Also as noted at paragraph 38, and claimed in claim 27, connecting includes signaling the dispatch host computer upon connection.

6. GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

Claims 1-24, 26 and 27 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

7. ARGUMENT

A) The Applicable Law under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. M.P.E.P § 2131. To anticipate a claim, a reference must disclose every element of the challenged claim and enable one skilled in the art to make the anticipating subject matter. *PPG Industries, Inc. V. Guardian Industries Corp.*, 75 F.3d 1558, 37 USPQ2d 1618 (Fed. Cir. 1996). The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the claim. *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action did not make out a *prima facie* case of anticipation because Devine does not teach each and every claim element arranged as in the claims.

B) Discussion of the rejection of claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter “Devine”). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper *prima facie* showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach distributing a connection as a function of “an analysis of activity across the load host computers” as required by claims 1-9.

Devine teaches a double firewalled system. As described at col. 9, lines 4 through 59 and as shown in Figs. 4 and 5, web servers 24 and 52 are placed in a demilitarized zone (DMZ). Client devices 10 access the web servers through public internet 15. Attempts to access the company intranet pass through a firewall 29a (the first firewall) to a dispatcher service and from there are directed through a proxy firewall (the second firewall).

As can be seen in Fig. 4, and as noted at col. 9, lines 42-44, Devine's network architecture may include a variety of application specific proxies associated with Intranet application servers. As noted at col. 10, lines 9-16,

Each of the individual proxies may be maintained on the dispatcher server 26, the related application server, or a separate proxy server situated between the dispatcher server 26 and the midrange server 40. The relevant proxy waits for requests from an application client running on the customer's workstation 10 and then services the request, either by handling them internally or forwarding them to its associated Intranet application server 40.

Appellant respectfully submits that Devine fails to teach distributing a connection as a function of "an analysis of activity across the load host computers" as required by claims 1-9. Devine does not perform such an analysis. In fact, Devine teaches away from it. Instead of locating proxies to balance the load across the proxy servers and rebalance as necessary, Devine suggests that proxies be placed in the dispatch server, on the application servers or in a separate proxy server, as noted above. The section cited by the Examiner (Column 9, lines 42-59) does not mention such an analysis. Instead, it discusses the use of application specific proxies.

Since Devine does not teach each and every claim element arranged as in the claims, the rejection of claims 1-9 is incorrect. Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claims 1-9 is respectfully requested.

C) Discussion of the rejection of claims 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter "Devine"). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach that the load host computer and the dispatch host computer communicate information regarding the connection of the load host computer to the computer system as required by

claims 6-8. The sections cited by the Examiner (Column 22, lines 6-30 and Column 24, lines 7-43) do not mention such an approach.

Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claims 6-8 is respectfully requested.

D) Discussion of the rejection of claims 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claims 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter “Devine”). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach that the load host computer and the dispatch host computer communicate information regarding the connection of the load host computer to the computer system and that that information is stored in a configuration file within the dispatch host computer as required by claims 7 and 8. The sections cited by the Examiner (Column 23, lines 17-47 and Column 24, lines 35-43) describe a load balancing algorithm and a real-time monitoring system, respectively, not the use of a configuration file to store load host computer information.

Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claims 7 and 8 is respectfully requested.

E) Discussion of the rejection of claims 10-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claims 10-16 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter “Devine”). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach distributing a connection as a function of “an analysis of activity across the load host computers” as required by claims 10-16.

Devine is described above.

Appellant respectfully submits that Devine fails to teach distributing a connection as a function of “an analysis of activity across the load host computers” as required by claims 10-16. Devine does not perform such an analysis. In fact, Devine teaches away from it. Instead of locating proxies to balance the load across the proxy servers and rebalance as necessary, Devine suggests that proxies be placed in the dispatch server, on the application servers or in a separate proxy server, as noted above. The sections cited by the Examiner (Column 9, lines 42-59, Column 13, lines 28-59 and column 24, line 66 through Column 25, line 67) do not mention such an analysis. Instead, they discuss the use of application specific proxies, logical messaging between the client and the web server and logical messaging between the dispatch server and the application specific proxy, respectively.

Since Devine does not teach each and every claim element arranged as in the claims, the rejection of claims 10-16 is incorrect. Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claims 10-16 is respectfully requested.

F) Discussion of the rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter “Devine”). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach that the load host computer and the dispatch host computer communicate information regarding the availability of the load host computer as required by claim 11. Instead, the section cited by the Examiner for this teaching describes how application proxies receive and respond to requests from an application client.

Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claim 11 is respectfully requested.

G) Discussion of the rejection of claims 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter “Devine”). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach the selection of the load host computer based on the factors listed in any of claims 13-16. The section cited by the Examiner for this teaching is limited to a description of the web server 24 upstream from the dispatch server 26. It does not describe the selection of the load host computer based on the factors listed in any of claims 13-16. Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claims 13-16 is respectfully requested.

H) Discussion of the rejection of claims 17-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claims 17-22 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter “Devine”). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach “identifying a resource intensive protocol” or “designating a load host computer for providing primary support for said resource intensive protocol” as required by claims 17-22. The first section cited by the Examiner for teaching “identifying a resource intensive protocol” (Column 9, line 42 through Column 10, line 67) simply describes the architecture and use of application specific proxies, while the second section (Column 24, line 66 through Column 25, line 67) describes how a message passes from a dispatch server to an application specific proxy. There is no “identifying a resource intensive protocol” as described by Appellant and claimed in claims 17-22.

The Examiner cites Column 9, line 42 through Column 10, line 67 and Column 13, line 30 through Column 14, line 37 as teaching “designating a load host computer for providing primary support for said resource intensive protocol.” The sections cited, however, simply describes the architecture and use of application specific proxies and

how a message passes from a client browser to an application specific proxy, respectively. There is no designating as defined by Appellant and claimed in claims 17-22.

Since Devine does not teach each and every claim element arranged as in the claims, the rejection of claims 17-22 is incorrect. Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claims 17-22 is respectfully requested.

I) Discussion of the rejection of claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claim 19 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter “Devine”). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach designating a load host computer by “analyzing activity across a plurality of host computers and selecting a load host computer based on the load host computer activity analysis” as required by claim 19. Instead, the section cited by the Examiner for this teaching simply describes where the application server proxies reside and how requests for the proxies are validated. Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claim 19 is respectfully requested.

J) Discussion of the rejection of claims 23, 24, 26 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claims 23, 24, 26 and 27 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach updating a configuration file on the dispatch host computer to reflect the connection of a second load host computer as required by claims 23, 24, 26 and 27. The sections cited by the Examiner for this teaching instead describe a customer GUI (Column 7, lines 27-37), the DMZ web servers (Column 23, lines 17-40) and the use of a first router 55 to route messages from the DMZ

web servers to the dispatcher server 26 and a second router 65 to route messages from the real time monitoring server 52 to the dispatcher server 26 (Column 24, lines 44-51). There is no discussion of how to recognize and configure a new load host computer as described by Appellant and claimed in claims 23, 24, 26 and 27.

Since Devine does not teach each and every claim element arranged as in the claims, the rejection of claims 23, 24, 26 and 27 is incorrect. Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claims 23, 24, 26 and 27 is respectfully requested.

K) Discussion of the rejection of claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claim 24 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter “Devine”). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach communicating information between the newly connected computer and the dispatch host computer “regarding the availability of said second load host computer” as required by claim 24. The sections cited by the Examiner for this teaching instead describe a customer GUI (Column 7, lines 27-37), the DMZ web servers (Column 23, lines 17-40) and the use of a first router 55 to route messages from the DMZ web servers to the dispatcher server 26 and a second router 65 to route messages from the real time monitoring server 52 to the dispatcher server 26 (Column 24, lines 44-51).

Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claim 24 is respectfully requested.

L) Discussion of the rejection of claim 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708).

Claim 27 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Devine et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,708, hereinafter “Devine”). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Appellant respectfully submits that the Final Office Action has made an improper prima facie showing of anticipation at least because Devine fails to teach that connecting a second load host computer to the dispatch host computer includes signaling

the dispatch host computer upon connection as required by claim 27. The section cited by the Examiner for this teaching instead describes the use of a first router 55 to route messages from the DMZ web servers to the dispatcher server 26 and a second router 65 to route messages from the real time monitoring server 52 to the dispatcher server 26 (Column 24, lines 44-51).

Reconsideration and reversal of the rejection of claim 27 is respectfully requested.

8. SUMMARY

For the reasons argued above, claims 1-24, 26 and 27 were not properly rejected under § 102(e) as being unpatentable over Devine et al.

It is respectfully submitted that the art cited does not render the claim anticipated and that the claims are patentable over the cited art. Reversal of the rejection and allowance of the pending claim are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM E. DUNCAN et al.

By their Representatives,

SCHWEGMAN, LUNDBERG,

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Date October 25, 2005 By Thomas F. Brennan
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Reg. No. 35,075

CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Appeal Brief, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 25th day of October, 2005.

THOMAS F. BRENNAN
Name

Thomas F. Brennan
Signature

CLAIMS APPENDIX

1. (Rejected) A computer system for providing proxy firewall services for a computer network, comprising:
 - a dispatch host computer, said dispatch host computer being connectable to an external network; and
 - at least one load host computer coupled to said dispatch host computer, each load host computer configured to provide proxy firewall services and each load host computer being connectable to one or more application servers, wherein said connection from the external network is distributed from said dispatch host computer to a particular load host computer based on an analysis of the type of protocol of the connection and an analysis of activity across the load host computers.
2. (Rejected) The computer system of claim 1, wherein said dispatch host computer includes a monitoring element that listens for connections on multiple ports.
3. (Rejected) The computer system of claim 2, wherein said monitoring element is a dispatch proxy.
4. (Rejected) The computer system of claim 1, wherein said at least one load host computer is a protocol specific load host computer.
5. (Rejected) The computer system of claim 1, wherein said at least one load host computer can handle multiple protocols.
6. (Rejected) The computer system of claim 1, wherein said at least one load host computer and said dispatch host computer communicate information regarding the connection of said at least one load host computer to the computer system.
7. (Rejected) The computer system of claim 6, wherein said dispatch host computer

includes a configuration file with information relating to any load host computers in the computer system.

8. (Rejected) The computer system of claim 7, wherein upon the connection of another load host computer to the computer system, said configuration file is updated to reflect the availability of said another load host computer in the computer system.

9. (Rejected) The computer system of claim 1, wherein said dispatch host computer provides proxy firewall services.

10. (Rejected) A method of providing proxy firewall services for a computer network,
comprising:

identifying a set of load host computers, each load host computer in said set of load host computers being configured to provide proxy firewall services;

monitoring one or more incoming ports at a dispatch host computer for a connection;

upon identification of said connection, selecting from said set of load host computers a load host computer to which said connection should be forwarded based on an analysis of the type of protocol of said connection and an analysis of activity across the load host computers.

11. (Rejected) The method of claim 10, wherein said identifying comprises communicating information between said dispatch host computer and said load host computers relating to the availability of said load host computers.

12. (Rejected) The method of claim 10, wherein said monitoring comprises monitoring for a connection with a dispatch proxy that monitors one or more incoming ports on said dispatch host computer simultaneously.

13. (Rejected) The method of claim 10, wherein said selecting comprises selecting a load host computer based on a round robin load distribution among said load host computers.

14. (Rejected) The method of claim 10, wherein said selecting comprises selecting a load host computer based on the availability of the load host computers.

15. (Rejected) The method of claim 10, wherein said selecting comprises selecting a load host computer based on the percentage of the total number of simultaneous proxied connections the load host computer can support.

16. (Rejected) The method of claim 10, wherein said selecting comprises selecting a load host computer that can support a resource intensive protocol.

17. (Rejected) A firewall network resource method comprising:
identifying a resource intensive protocol;
designating a load host computer for providing primary support for said resource intensive protocol; and
routing a connection for said resource intensive protocol from a dispatch host computer to said designated load host.

18. (Rejected) The method of claim 17, further comprising:
processing on the dispatch host computer a connection for at least one protocol other than said resource intensive protocol.

19. (Rejected) The method of claim 17, wherein said designated load host provides exclusive support for said resource intensive protocol and wherein designating includes analyzing activity across a plurality of host computers and selecting a load host computer based on the load host computer activity analysis.

20. (Rejected) The method of claim 17, wherein said designated load host is dedicated to said resource intensive protocol.
21. (Rejected) The method of claim 17, further comprising:
designating another load host for multi-purpose support.
22. (Rejected) The method of claim 17, wherein said dispatch host computer has multi-purpose support.
23. (Rejected) A method of expanding proxy firewall services for a computer network
comprising:
receiving a connection at a dispatch host computer;
selecting a first load host computer to which the connection should be forwarded;
forwarding said connection to said first load host computer;
connecting a second load host computer to said dispatch host computer; and
updating a configuration file on said dispatch host computer to reflect the connection of said second load host computer, wherein upon said updating, said second load host computer is available to process forwarded connections from said dispatch host computer.
24. (Rejected) The method of claim 23, wherein said updating comprises communicating
information between said dispatch host computer and said second load host computer regarding the availability of said second load host computer.
25. (Canceled)
26. (Rejected) The method of claim 23, wherein said connecting and said updating occur during the provision of proxy firewall services.

27. (Rejected) The method of claim 23, wherein said connecting includes signaling the dispatch host computer upon connection.

EVIDENCE APPENDIX

None.

RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

None.